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In Memory of
STEPHEN SPAULDING
1907 – 1925
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DESCRIPTION

OF THE

VIEW

OF

VENICE;

TAKEN, AND PAINTED BY

MESSRS. BARKER AND BURFORD,

FROM THE PIAZZA DI S. MARCO;

WITH

A Representation of the Carnival;

NOW EXHIBITING IN THEIR

PANORAMA, STRAND.

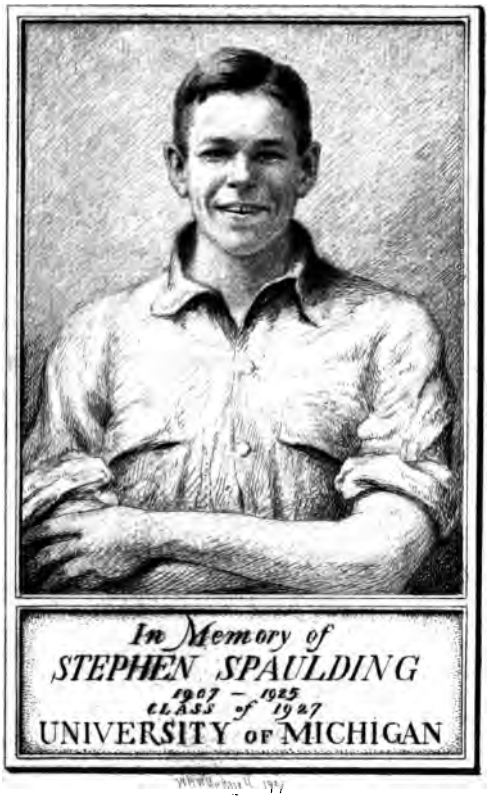
Barker, Henry Aston.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY JAS.-W. AND CHAS. ADLARD, 23, BARTHOLOMEW-CLOSE, WEST SMITHFIELD.

1819.

[*Price Sixpence.*]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buildings immediately in the foreground, with a pleasing view of the more distant objects. The present subject, therefore, was taken from that point: yet it is to be regretted, that, notwithstanding the frequency of canals in every part of the city, amounting to four hundred, not one can be seen from the Place of St. Mark, owing to the height of the houses and their being so close together. The spectator is so placed as to have an elevated view of the whole square, the Ducal Palace, and *Piazetta*, with a minute representation of the church of St. Mark, a structure as extraordinary in its form and architectural arrangement, as costly in the materials employed in its decoration. To give an additional interest to the picture, a representation of the gay scene of the Carnival has been introduced, where quack-doctors, mountebanks, processions, and a masked population, amusing themselves in various ways, form the principal subject of the fore-ground.

The city of Venice is entirely surrounded by water, which flows from the Adriatic over extensive shoals, called the Lagune: in many parts the depth is not more than two or three feet; but that varies with the tide, which, at Venice, rises about two feet. Numerous islands, covered with beautiful churches and other buildings, give the appearance of considerable magnitude to Venice, when seen from the water; but the city itself is not of great extent. It contained, previous to the late revolution, a population of about 150,000 souls: this number, however, seems to have very much decreased since that event.

The inhabitants are well supplied with provisions of every description, from the opposite shores: however, in the event of a dry season, they are frequently in want of fresh water; and, in such cases, are obliged to have it brought in large

boats from the river Brenta, which flows into the Adriatic, on the west side. There being no springs in Venice, the wells are filled with rain-water from the roofs of houses: the water is purified by passing through sand and charcoal, with which the wells are supplied, at the expence of the Municipality.

St. Mark's Place is an irregular quadrangle: the south range of buildings (No. 10), called the *Procuratie Nuove*, was built by Sansovino, upon a model by Scamozzio; it was begun in the year 1583, and, when finished, was occupied, in the time of the republic, by the *Procuratori di S. Marco*,—officers next in dignity to the Doge. At present, it is inhabited by the Austrian Governor; and contains some of the public offices. The west side (No. 14,) was built by the French after the revolution; it contains the grand entrance of state, and ball-room erected upon the site of the church of St. Geminiano, ordered to be pulled down by Bonaparte for that purpose. The north side of the Place (No. 24,) is called the *Procuratie Vecchie*, and is much older than the opposite side: private individuals inhabit this range. One continued arcade runs round these three sides of the Place, containing shops of all descriptions, and several coffee-houses. Here the scene is particularly brilliant in the evening, it being the principal promenade, and generally crowded with well dressed persons of the city, as also strangers of every nation; among whom, numerous Turks, Greeks, and Algerines, in rich costume, give a pleasing variety to this *Palais Royal* of Venice. Several of the coffee-houses have temporary marquees erected in front of them, to accommodate the company, who are constantly amused by itinerant musicians, both vocal and instrumental, playing and singing at intervals.

The principal entrance to the *Piazza di S. Marco* is on the north side, under the Clock Tower, seen at No. 35. This tower contains an astronomical clock, in which the earth is the centre, the sun moving round it, with the moon shewing her phases: the signs of the zodiac are also represented, but their order is reversed. Above the clock are gilt figures of the Virgin and Child; over them is a winged lion, holding a book, on which is the following inscription: "*Pax tibi Marce Evangelis ta meus.*"* The tower is terminated with a bell and two colossal bronze figures which strike the hour and quarters.

The east side of St. Mark's Place is occupied by the church of St. Mark, and a small square, (No. 42,) called the Place of Flowers, it being the flower market. The pavement of this square is elevated in the centre to protect a well,—one of those which supply the city with rain-water: in front are two lions, sculptured in beautiful red marble, brought from the island of Zea, in the Archipelago. They were placed to commemorate the discovery of a plot to destroy the republic. The conspiracy was headed by one Baramonte Tripolo, who had ordered a meeting of the conspirators in this square: the noise occasioned by the sudden assemblage of such a number of persons, made the inhabitants run to their windows to ascertain the cause, when a woman, hastily opening hers, accidentally threw down a flower-pot, which, falling upon the head of Tripolo, killed him on the spot. The conspirators, seeing

* There is a tradition that, near the spot where the church of *St. Francesco della Vigna* now stands, St. Mark stopped on his way from Aquilla to Rome, when he was accosted by an angel in the words of this inscription; and, in consequence, they were adopted as the motto of Venice.

their chief fall, as they considered by the interposition of Providence, were struck with terror, and instantly dispersed without further attempting the object of their meeting.

Opposite the church of St. Mark are three very lofty flag-staffs, upon beautifully-wrought bronze bases: they were placed to represent the three kingdoms of Cyprus, Candia, and the Morea, conquered by the Venetians. During the republic, the flags of those places were hoisted upon days of public festival.

The Piazzetta is an open space, running from St. Mark's to the water. On the east side is the Ducal Palace (No. 5), a Gothic structure of great extent; containing many splendid apartments, filled with a profusion of fine paintings, by Paolo Veronese, Tintoretto, and other celebrated masters of the Venetian school. The officers of the police department are in this building, and the Austrian main-guard is stationed in that part of it called the Broglio (No. 4); where, during the republic, the senators and nobles assembled to converse upon public business at a particular hour in the day, at which time all other persons were prohibited from coming near them. Opposite to the Ducal Palace stands what was the Public Library (No. 8); a beautiful building, of one story, raised upon an arcade, and ornamented with white marble statues on the parapet. Behind this building, but intercepted by it in the view, is the Zecca, or mint, which fronts the water. The two columns (No. 6,) are of Egyptian granite; they were brought from Greece about the year 1206 with a third, which fell into the water, and, from want of power to raise it at the time, became buried in mud, so as to be now entirely lost. These two columns are at the entrance of the Piazetta, next the water: on one

stands a winged lion, in bronze; on the other, a bronze statue of St. Theodore standing upon a crocodile. The lion was removed by the French, and placed upon the Hospital of Invalids, at Paris, but was restored to Venice with the celebrated horses. During the republic, criminals condemned to suffer death were executed between the columns. (No. 9,) the Campienello, or bell-tower of St. Mark's, is removed from the church,—a circumstance very common in Italy. Its height is 300 feet, from the base to the angel upon the pinnacle;* and, though built so far back as the year 1148, upon a swampy foundation, it has been so admirably constructed as to have stood unmoved, or in the slightest degree losing its upright position. The ascent to the bells is by means of inclined planes, with a step at each angle; and is very gentle. From the gallery above is one of the most extensive views imaginable: here Venice appears in all its grandeur, spread like a map, surrounded by the Lagune, studded with islands in every direction, and bounded on the North by the Tyrol Alps, whose chain, extending to the East, melts away, and is lost in the atmosphere. On the South is the Adriatic; and, in the West are seen the dark blue hills near Padua; the whole forming a *coup d'œil*, which, though not calculated for a picture, from its extent, is nevertheless of exquisite beauty, and should be seen by all who visit this interesting city. At the base of the Campienello, fronting St. Mark's, is the *Logetta*, (No. 7,)—a small, but beautiful, building, constructed of the finest marble, erected by Sansovino. In it the *Avogadore* (one of the Council of Ten,) used to sit, and receive claims

* From the great height of the tower, it was impossible to introduce the pinnacle and angel in the picture; but they are represented complete in the explanatory plate.

upon the government, &c. It is now the place where the lottery is drawn.

No. 1, the Ducal Church of St. Mark,

Is become the principal church of the city: it was formerly only that of the palace. This church was begun in the year 829; but, being destroyed by fire, was rebuilt in 976. The interior is entirely covered with Mosaic pictures, in coloured glass, on a gold ground; the altars and columns are of the richest marbles, as also the tessellated pavement: these decorations were finished in 1071, and are in lavish profusion. The front of the exterior is formed of ten arches, five above, and five below; the lower ones are supported by two rows of columns, amounting to 292 in number; some are of porphyry, others of *verd-antique*, and the remainder of costly marble,—all trophies of the Venetian conquests in Greece, Egypt, and the Holy Land. The upper centre arch is terminated by a colossal statue of St. Mark; and, over the lower one, stand the celebrated Grecian horses, made of Corinthian brass, said to be the work of Lysippus, but that is now very much doubted. Little is known, with certainty, where these horses were placed in Rome; it is supposed, they were successively upon the triumphal arches of Augustus, of Domitian, of Trajan, and of Constantine. This latter emperor caused them to be transported to Constantinople, with the chariot of the sun, and placed them in the Hypodrome; in which place they remained till the Venetians captured that city, in the year 1206, when the horses were removed to Venice, where they stood over the grand entrance of St. Mark's nearly 600 years. In 1797, they were taken by the French to Paris; but, in 1815, were restored

to the Venetians, who replaced them in their former situation. The outside of St. Mark's is curiously cased with marble. The pictures under the arches are executed in Mosaic, similar to those in the interior. In the same year (829,) that this church was begun, the body of St. Mark was brought to Venice, from Alexandria, in Egypt, by two merchants, named Bono and Rustico, who contrived to convey the Saint, concealed in a basket, covered with fish. Upon this great acquisition, the Venetians declared St. Mark the patron and protector of the Republic. The lion is supposed to represent this evangelist, from the mystic vision of Ezekiel; and, in consequence, has been placed on its towers and standards.*

No. 2, Pietro del Bando,

A short porphyry column, at the corner of St. Mark's. On this pillar, the *commandadore* of a tribunal announced the banishment of any of the nobles who were condemned to that punishment by the Republic.

No. 5, Church of St. Georgio Maggiore,

On the island of that name, now the Porto-Franco. This church, built by Palladio, begun in 1556, is one of the most beautiful in Venice, and is best placed to ornament the city. The fine picture of the Marriage of Canaan, by Paolo Veronese, was taken from the refectory of the convent at-

* The winged lion was formerly placed upon every building belonging to government, as also upon St. Mark's, where the plaster is seen broken, in the upper centre arch; but the French removed all those emblems of the Republic, when they took possession of Venice. The only one that has been restored is upon the Clock Tower, over the entrance to St. Mark's Place.